

seek

21 days of prayer + fasting



liftchurch

how to use this guide

This guide is designed to lead you in prayer, fasting, and scripture reading for the 21 days leading up to Easter Sunday.

As you practice seeking God, you will have a deeper understanding and appreciation of what the Easter season means. You will start to see the power of prayer impact your relationships, work, family, and every area of your life. As you fast, your dependence on the Lord will greatly increase and you will see Him move on your behalf like never before. Your commitment to reading God's Word will change your perspective and give you a renewed sense of who you are because of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

scripture reading plan

The daily scripture readings are intended to help you interact with and respond to God's Word. We encourage you to use a journal as you read each passage and follow the **SOAP** method:

- Read the **scripture**
- Write down an **observation**
- Make a tangible **application**
- Seek God in **prayer**

weekly reflections

At the end of each week, there is space in this book to write down a few things that God is showing you as you seek Him. This is a great opportunity to reflect on the work of the Holy Spirit in your life so you can review it again in the future.

**“I sought the LORD, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.”**

psalm 34:4

why do we fast?

We fast to draw nearer to God.

Biblical fasting always has to do with eliminating distractions for a spiritual purpose; it hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out. It also enables us to celebrate the goodness and mercy of God and prepares our hearts for all the good things God desires to bring into our lives through the power of His Word and the Holy Spirit.

We do not fast for selfish motives.

While there are physical benefits to fasting, this should not be our main priority. The foundation and motivation of a fast should be found in a desire to seek the Lord and come to a deeper understanding of our need for Him. Isaiah 58 warns us that when we fast to seek our own pleasure, God does not even listen to us!

We fast for personal spiritual growth.

While it is OK to do a fast with a group of people, this is a personal experience between you and the Lord. Psalm 138:8 says, “The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me; Your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of Your hands.” God is working in your life and wants to use this opportunity to grow you and sanctify you to be more like His Son, Jesus.

We do not fast for the praise of others.

Fasting isn't easy, but it is easy to be prideful during a fast. The temptation to let others know that what we're doing is hard in hopes that they would commend us or affirm our righteousness is a distraction from the enemy. Matthew 6:16-18 tells us that our fasting should be done in a way that our reward comes from God alone. Completing a fast is not the goal; what happens during the time of fasting is what truly matters.

how do we fast?

We fast with a plan and a purpose.

Whatever type of fast you choose, fill the gap of what you are giving up with something that will turn your attention to the Lord. Fasting seeks to take the pains of want and turn them into a desire to see God work. Whether it's praying, reading the Bible, journaling, or singing worship music, be intentional with the time you would normally spend eating or doing something else. Without a plan and a purpose, it's not fasting; it's just going hungry.

types of fasts

Your personal fast should present a level of challenge, but it is very important to know your body and your options, and most importantly to seek God in prayer and follow what the Holy Spirit leads you to do.

soul fast

This fast is a great option if you do not have much experience fasting food, if you have health issues that prevent you from fasting food, or if you wish to refocus certain areas of your life that are out of balance. For example, you might choose to stop using social media or watching television for the duration of the fast and then carefully bring that element back into your life in healthy doses at the conclusion of the fast.

selective fast

This type of fast involves removing certain elements from your diet. One example of a selective fast is the Daniel Fast, during which you remove meat, sweets, dairy, and bread from your diet and consume water and juice for fluids and fruits, nuts, and vegetables for food.

partial fast

This fast involves abstaining from eating any type of food during part of the day. For example, sunup to sundown, or a specific meal.

complete fast

In this fast, you drink only liquids, typically water with light juices as an option.

For more resources on fasting, visit
liftchurch.co/seek

prepare

Take some time to pray and prepare for these 21 days. Refer back to this page often to reflect on the reason for what you are doing.

name

type of fast

start date

I'm asking God to...

1 day

read: Daniel 10

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: This passage is a source for the idea of a 21-day fast. As you set apart these three weeks to seek God, know that God has already heard your prayer. He is already at work on your behalf. What specifically are you seeking from God during this time? Write down your prayer so you can reflect on it at the end of the 21 days. Spend time praying for God to speak to you and give you strength.

2 day

read: 1 Chronicles 18

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: During this fast, build an altar and lay a sacrifice on it that honors God. It will cost your convenience, your comfort, and it will also take some serious self-control and commitment. As you enter the second day of fasting, make sure it's a sacrifice that will cost you something. Share your written commitment on page 5 with a friend who will hold you accountable to your commitment. Pray for God to show you what He wants you to sacrifice.

3 day

read: Daniel 1

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: Nothing but vegetables and water. And not just for three weeks, but more likely for the duration of their training in Babylon! This response from these four young men didn't come from a fear of getting caught. It came from a devotion to God's commands already formed in them before being taken from their homeland. During this fast, you'll have many opportunities to deviate from your commitment—especially if you're fasting alone or if no one will find out. Pray that God will give you the resolve and courage to obey His Word and remain steadfast in seeking His work in a specific area.

4 day

read: Psalm 119: 1-16

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: This longest psalm in the Bible is primarily about a passion for God's Word. These 21 days you've set apart will be much richer by combining Bible reading with your fasting and prayer. You may want to make plans to start a reading plan that takes you all the way through the Bible. How would you describe your passion for God's Word at this moment? Pray today that God will increase that desire in your heart during this time.

5 day

read: Matthew 6:5-18

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: Isn't fasting supposed to be a secret? You may have started this journey with a group that is fasting along with you. Many fasts in the Bible were corporate fasts called by leaders for a whole group to participate in together. Reflect on the heart of what Jesus is saying in this passage. What has been the motive behind any conversations you've had about fasting? Is it to encourage others or receive support? Is there some secret wish to be seen as holy or spiritual? Pray today asking God to uncover your motives for fasting and ask the Lord for the encouragement you need without clouding your heart with pride.

6 day

read: Isaiah 58

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: This is a message from God to His people who were frustrated with His lack of response to their fasting. It's easy to confuse fasting with a hunger strike to get God to do what you want. But this chapter gives clarity on why we fast. Pray that God will use your experience with hunger and discomfort to permanently alter how you see those in the world who are lost and needy. Pray that God will break sin in your life and empty you of all that is you as He fills you with all that is Him.

*You will seek me
and find me when
you search for me
with all your heart.*

J E R E M I A H 2 9 : 1 3

8
day

read: Psalm 100

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: You are entering week two of your fast! This psalm talks about entering God's presence with thankfulness, gladness, joy, and praise in your heart. If you've become focused on the physical hardships you're facing or the burdens you're bringing to God in prayer, then spend today just being joyful in the Lord. Write down some things that bring you joy today. Sing a song of praise to Him. Pray that God will stir in you an urgency to press in and see what He has planned for you beyond His gates.

9
day

read: Romans 12

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: This is a great time to explore how you can present your body as a living sacrifice to God. This passage starts with that challenge and offers many ways to express it. How has your fast been helping you experience dependence in new ways? Pray today and ask God to continue to reveal His will for you during this time of sacrifice and worship.

10
day

read: Luke 4

S ■ O ■ A ■ P ■

reflect: Forty days of nothing? Not hardly. Even though Jesus fasted for 40 days, He clearly came out stronger than ever based on the events following it. While Jesus experienced a supernatural fast, how is your fast allowing you to see the supernatural? Are you excited about how God is working or do you feel like you're floundering? Maybe you're not experiencing the outcomes you expected. Ask God to lead you into the same kind of preparation, power, and purpose that Jesus gained from His time of fasting.

11

day

read: James 1

S O A P

respond: This chapter has many convicting challenges—one being for you to match your faith with action. Don't just contemplate God's Word—do what it says. You are now beginning the second half of your fast. Do you need to spend more time listening or doing? Ask God for wisdom about where He wants to lead you during this second half of your fast.

12

day

read: 2 Corinthians 1

S O A P

respond: Food is a source of comfort for many. Reflect on how much your thoughts have been overtaken with craving certain foods, missing the things you're fasting from, or even how much weight you could lose. Is it often? If it were alcohol or a harmful drug, would you consider yourself addicted if you were this consumed by your desire for them? For many, this fast can begin an awareness of a harmful place food may have in your life. It can reveal an addiction. Pray that the God of compassion and all comfort will become your primary source of comfort. Ask Him to use this experience with suffering to remove anything in your life that has taken His place as your Comforter.

13

day

read: 1 Peter 2

S O A P

respond: You are chosen, holy, set apart, a royal priest—you are a child of God. You may be in need of an anchor right now. Set Christ as your cornerstone today. Write down the ways He has brought you from darkness into light. Spend time in prayer today thanking God or beginning a work in you with His Son set as the foundation for Him to build upon.

Ask,

and it will be given to you;

Seek,

and you will find;

Knock,

and it will be opened to you.

MATTHEW 7:7

intro to Holy Week

Do you remember the *second* time you saw your favorite movie or read your favorite book? You probably watched or read it with a new sense of enthrallment, looking for details of the plot you missed or the subtle foreshadowing you overlooked. Now, imagine you committed to revisit this favorite piece every single year. You marked a date on the calendar and you knew exactly when it was coming.

It is probably safe to assume that you would grow weary of this after a few years. Sure, you might still enjoy pieces of it but you would quickly have the script memorized and the one-liners would cause your eyes to roll.

If you've been around church for a few years, the Easter season can be this way. Most everyone knows the story about Jesus and how He died. It can be really hard to gain new perspective or read the same story again with a fresh set of eyes.

However, fasting does something amazing for our perspective. Whenever we remove something from our lives for a period of time, we find that we can think more clearly. We see things in a fresh way, whether it's a trial we are facing or simply how we approach daily life. This can apply to how we read and view the Easter story.

For these last 7 days, the daily scripture readings will walk through Jesus' final days, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. As you continue to fast and pray, read these verses with a refreshed view of the suffering Jesus Christ endured to pay for our sins and offer us eternal life.

For each day you'll find room to respond to the passage for yourself as well as some additional resources. Carve out some time to interact with each day to maximize the impact of this week. As we journey to the cross of Friday, and ultimately the empty tomb of Sunday, don't rush past how God wants to speak to you through His Word every single day.

15 day

read: Luke 19:28-44

respond:

additional resources



“Hosanna, Father, Hosanna! You do save! You are going to save! And eternal thanks that You have saved me! May the obedience of my attitudes, the sacrifice of my actions, and the praise of my lips today be an intimate expression to You of my gratitude for Your priceless gifts in my life. In Jesus’ name, amen.”



Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:25-29; Ephesians 2:4-5



Shout Hosanna - Passion
Hosanna - Hillsong United

16 day

read: Mark 11:12-19

respond:

additional resources



“Father, forgive me for filling my time with things that don’t matter and neglecting prayer. I confess all known sin to You and ask You to cleanse my heart and make it new. Thank You for adopting me into Your family and giving me a new identity in You. Help me to pray and ask with all confidence that You will act, amen!”



Isaiah 56:1-8; Psalm 20



Open the Eyes of my Heart - Paul Baloche
Come Thou Fount (Above All Else) - Shane & Shane

17 day

read: Luke 21 & 22:1-2

respond:

additional resources



“God, help me to put my hope and trust in You and in Your Word. This world is deceiving and it is easy to find myself just going through the motions. I want to believe and live like there is nothing else that is as worthy as You. Lord, I want to give You all of me and all I have. Take it all! In Your precious name, amen.”



Daniel 7:13-14; Isaiah 40:1-8



Even So Come - Passion
Revelation Song - Kari Jobe

18 day

read: Luke 14:3-11

respond:

additional resources



“Jesus, I pray that when the opportunity comes to choose between something that is precious to me and You, that I would choose You every single time. I know that You are worth more than anything this life can offer. You laid down your life for me, I pray that I would be willing to give my life to You in return, amen.”



Matthew 26:14-16; Luke 22:3-6; Zechariah 11:12-13



If I Have You - Vertical Worship
I Surrender All - All Sons & Daughters

19 day

read: Mark 14:12-72

respond:

additional resources



“Lord Jesus, I bow before You in humility and ask You to examine my heart today. Show me anything that is not pleasing to You. Reveal any secret pride, any unconfessed sin, any rebellion or unforgiveness that may be hindering my relationship with You. Wash me and make me white as snow. Thank You for the price You paid for me, amen!”



John 16:16-24, 32-33; Psalm 41:7-13, Zechariah 13:7



Remembrance (Communion Song) - Matt Redman
Nothing but the Blood - Corey Voss

20 day

read: Mark 15:1-37

respond:

additional resources



“Thank you, Lord, that by Your wounds we are healed. Thank You that because of your sacrifice we can live free. Thank You that sin and death have been conquered, and that in You we are given new life. Thank You that we can say with great hope, ‘It is finished.’ In Jesus’ name, amen.”



Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53:1-7



O Sacred Head Now Wounded - Page CXVI
Lift Your Head Weary Sinner (Chains) - Crowder

21 day

read: Matthew 27:62-66

respond:

*As you prepare to break your fast, we recommend doing so slowly.
For information on how to safely break a fast, visit liftchurch.co/seek.*

additional resources



“Father, give us faith in the midst of our darkest days. When violence and death seem to reign in the world, we can look to this story that does not end on a Saturday. Give us the anticipation to believe that something is coming, that Your power will be shown greatly even when it seems impossible, amen.”



Luke 23:54-56; Isaiah 53:8-12



Do It Again - Elevation Worship
God of Miracles - Chris McClarney

22 day

read: Luke 24:1-39

respond:

additional resources



“Lord, death could not hold You. And because of the resurrection, the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead is now alive in me! Thank You for the gift of salvation and that I will live forever in Your presence. To You be all glory and praise and power forever and ever, AMEN!”



Psalm 16:9-11; Matthew 28; Mark 16; John 20



O Praise The Name (Anástasis) - Hillsong Worship
Happy Day - Tim Hughes

reflect

Take some time to capture a few things that God has revealed to you and how He worked in a specific area in the last 3 weeks.

revisit

Look back on a few areas where God has grown you in your walk with Him.

desire for God's Word

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**
not at all not really undecided somewhat very much

desire for prayer

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**
not at all not really undecided somewhat very much

desire to fast again

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**
not at all not really undecided somewhat very much



*Seek the Lord and His strength
Seek His presence continually!*

1 CHRONICLES 16:11